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SERVICE QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT

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ABSTRACT

In higher education, students are the main customers of universities. As such, providing quality services and satisfying students' needs are vital for universities to succeed and sustain from the increasing competitiveness. Highly satisfied students spread a positive word of mouth communication, thus attracting new applicants with lower marketing costs. In view of the growing importance of quality education for an institution's growth and success, present investigations measures service quality in University of Kashmir. Based on data gathered from 425 respondents through a modified and statistically tested research instrument, the study concludes that by and large students are satisfied with the overall quality of educational services provided by the University; however, an overall improvement is needed in all dimensions of service quality to augment the quality educational services.

KEYWORDS

higher education, service quality, dimensions of service quality, student satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

In a competitive higher education marketplace, the quality of services delivered separates an institution from its competitors (Weideman, 1989) and, thus, has become a strategic option for many institutions of higher learning around the globe. It is important for educational institutions due to its influence on the post-enrolment communication behavior of the students (Parasuraman et. al., 1988; Cronin and Taylor, 1994; Marilyn, 2005; Angela, 2006; Berry, 2006; Ben, 2007). Highly satisfied students spread a positive word of mouth communication, thus attracting new applicants with lower marketing costs. Dissatisfied students, however, are likely to switch other competitive institutions (Plank and Chiagouris, 1997). Good quality education provides better learning opportunities and that the levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction strongly affect the student's success or failure of learning (Aldridge and Rowley, 1998). Higher education plays a fundamental and an increasingly important role in human, social and economic development (Barro and Martin, 1995; Escrigas, 2008). In fact it is not possible for a country to achieve sustainable development without sustainable investment in human capital. Brunat (2006a) found that there is a positive correlation between education and economic development and advocated that an educated population is a springboard for jumping to high socio-economic performance (Hoque, et. al., 2013). Universities and faculties, therefore, strive to provide high quality services because they need to compete for their students (Faganel and Macur, 2005) and have become increasingly interested in establishing quality management systems in response to the demands imposed by a complex, uncertain environment (Athiyaman and O'Donnell, 1994; Jenkins, 1994; Sallis and Hingley, 1991). Universities are being forced to consider the student perspective of quality of services provided and there is an increased interest in measuring service quality in higher education (Wright and O'Neill, 2002; Ghouri, et. al., 2012). Oldfield and Baron (2000) stated that for delivering high quality and student satisfaction, higher education institutions must focus on what their students want instead of gathering data based on what institutions consider their students regard as important (Farahmandian, et. al., 2013). In view of the above cited literature and also keeping in view the growing importance of service quality in higher educational institutions, present study attempts to measure service quality in the University of Kashmir with a view to offer suggestions, on the basis of study results, for improvisations of quality education in higher academic institutions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

During the past few decades service quality has become a major area of attention to practitioners, managers and researchers owing to its strong impact on business performance, lower costs, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and profitability (Leonard and Sasser, 1982; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Gammie, 1992; Hallowell, 1996; Chang and Chen, 1998; Gummesson, 1998; Lasser et. al., 2000; Newman, 2001; Sureshchander et. al., 2002). In order to achieve competitive advantage, many business organizations, particularly those in the service industry, are focusing on service quality (Dotchin and Oakland, 1994b; McColl, et. al., 1998). Arokiasamy (2012) stated that in today's world, in order to be able to create and retain a decent level of competitiveness, organizations and firms require to emphasize on quality as it is one of the most significant indicator for the success of an organization in an industry (Farahmandian, et. al., 2013). Similarly, Edvardsson (1998) highlighted that service quality is considered to be the cornerstone of marketing by many business people because of its ability to create sustainable competitive advantage and boost the bottom-line (Hoe, 2004).

The most notable contribution towards the assessment of quality of a given service has been conducted by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985). They defined service quality as the discrepancy between consumers' perceptions of services offered by a particular firm and their expectations about the firms offering such services (Chou et al., 2011). In other words, service quality is defined as to what extent service performance matches consumers' expectations (Parasuraman, et., al. 1985, 1988; Gronroos, 1984, 1994). If service performance matches or exceeds consumers' expectations, they will have favourable assessments towards service (Parasuraman, et. al., 1988). Evangelos and Graham (2007) along with Rajab, et. al., (2011) agree that everything about service quality depends on one's anticipation and expectation of the services and how the services meet with his/her expectations. Similarly, Kasper, et. al., (1999) defined service quality as the extent to which the service, the service process and the service organization can satisfy the expectations of the user. Robinson, (1999) also, defined service quality as the customers' attitude or judgment about the superiority of a service. Service quality is derived from a comparison of performance with ideal standards (Robinson, 1999; Lee, et. al., 2000).

The search of quality has become an important consumer trend (Parasuraman, et. al., 1985, 1988) and whole service industry is centered on the measurement of a consumer perceived quality and satisfaction (Berry, et. al., 1988). Parasuraman, et. al., (1985), offered the most widely accepted group of ten determinants of service quality that can be generalized for measuring any type of service. However, through empirical test, Parasuraman, et. al., (1988), condensed the ten dimensions into five and developed 22 item instrument called SERVQUAL for assessing customer perceptions of service quality. This new model consists of five dimensions such as 'tangibles' - appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communications materials; 'reliability' - ability to perform the promised

service dependably and accurately; 'assurance'- knowledge and courtesy of staff and their ability to convey trust and confidence; 'responsiveness' - willingness to help customers and provide prompt service; and 'empathy' - Caring and individualized attention, the firm provides to its customer (Parasuraman, et. al., 1988). Interestingly, many studies have emphasized on the importance of service quality in higher learning institutions (Illias, et. al., 2008; Athiyaman, 1997; Lee, et. al., 2000; Annamdevula and Bellamkonda, 2012). Illias, et. al., (2008) stated that the main factors that could affect the level of students' satisfaction were; students' perception on learning and teaching, support facilities for teaching and learning (libraries, computer and lab facilities), learning environment (rooms of lectures, laboratories, social space and university buildings), support facilities (health facilities, refectories, student accommodation, student services) and external aspects of being a student (such as finance, transportation). With all these capabilities, an institution will be able to meet student expectations and compete competitively. Service quality is the exclusively of experiences student engage in as part of their whole-person development.

Firdaus, (2005) designed HEdPERF (Higher Education Performance) which categorized five determinants of service quality in higher education. They are non-academic aspects, academic aspects, reputation, access, and program issues. Ford, et. al., (1999) included program issues in the determinants of service quality when they compared students' service quality perceptions in New Zealand and the USA. Cheng and Tam (1997) concluded that teaching methods were often used as indicators of education quality. Harvey and Hill (1995) found that teaching methods are one of the antecedents of student satisfaction. Industry links refer to the help students receive in making links with industry (Joseph and Joseph, 1997), including helpful career guidance and industry contacts provided by a university. Athiyaman (1997) used eight dimensions to examine university educational services namely, teaching, availability of staff for student consultation, library services, computing facilities, recreational facilities, class sizes, level and difficulty of subject content and student workload. Lee, et. al., (2000) explained that the two of the total quality experience variables "overall impression of the school" and "overall impression of the education quality" are the determinant variables in predicting the overall satisfaction. Annamdevula and Bellamkonda (2012) developed a measuring instrument of service quality called HiEdQUAL. This new measuring instrument consists of 27 items grouped into five dimensions, which they found to have significant positive influence on overall students' perceived service quality. The five factors are: teaching and course content, administrative services, academic facilities, campus infrastructure, and support services of service quality within the higher education sector.

The above cited literature brings to light that there is no consensus among the marketing scholars regarding the dimensionality of service quality construct. The five dimensional construct of Parasuraman, et. al., (1988), however, has been widely acknowledged in various research studies (Knutson, et. al., 1990; Blanchard and Galloway, 1994; Brysland and Curry, 2001; Atilgan, et. al., 2003; Khan, 2003; Lau, et. al., 2005; Ahmed, et. al., 2010; Markovic and Raspor, 2010; Shekarchizadeh, et. al., 2011; Al-Alak and Alnaser, 2012; Cerri, 2012).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Despite numerous attempts, there is no consensus among researchers on the measurement of service quality because of the intangible, heterogeneous and inseparable character of service. However, there are two widely acknowledged models used by researchers to measure service quality, i.e. SERVQUAL (Parasuraman, et. al., 1988) and SERVPERF (Cronin, et. al., 1992).

The foundation for the SERVQUAL scale is the gap model proposed by Parasuraman, et. al., (1985, 1988). The underpinning theory is that customer's evaluation of the quality is based on the comparison between their perceptions of what the organization should offer (expectations) and their perceptions of the performance of the organization providing the service. The SERVQUAL is a conceptual model that defines service quality from the customer's point of view, and consists of 22 similarly worded questions (22 for expectations and 22 for perceptions) for measuring customer expectations compared to customer perceptions of service quality (Parasuraman, et. al., 1985, 1988). SERVQUAL has become the most widely used instrument for measuring service quality in both profit and non-profit organizations. No other instrument has been tested as stringently and comprehensively as SERVQUAL (White and Abels, 1995).

While being widely applied, SERVQUAL have been criticized on both empirical and theoretical grounds (Cronin and Taylor, 1992, 1993, 1994; Babakus and Boller, 1992; Gundersen, et. al., 1996; Van Dyke et al., 1997). The authors denied the framework of SERVQUAL on perception/expectation basis and recommended "SERVPERF" consisting of 22 items which measures only performance. The marketing literature supports the argument that an instrument that measures customer experiences only may be the most valid by way of measuring perceived service quality (Zeithaml, et. al., 1996). Under the SERVPERF, a higher perceived performance represents higher service quality and higher customer satisfaction. Besides theoretical arguments, Cronin and Taylor (1992) provided empirical evidence across four industries (namely banks, pest control, dry cleaning and fast food) to confirm the superiority of their "performance-only" instrument over SERVQUAL Scale. The SERVPERF scale can be considered as an alternate of SERVQUAL and includes perceived performance component (Jain and Gupta, 2004).

Many researchers have preferred to use performance based instrument SERVPERF instead of SERVQUAL because of the advantages that SERVPERF has (Hill, 1995; Oldfield and Baron, 2000; Abdullah, 2006). The use of the SERVPERF would automatically shorten the SERVQUAL questionnaire by 50 percent (Cronin and Taylor, 1992). Many authors agree that customer's assessments may depend solely on performance, thereby suggesting that performance-based measure explains more of the variance in an overall measure of service quality (Oliver, 1989; Bolton and Drew, 1991a, b; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Boulding et. al., 1993; Quester et. al., 1995). These findings are consistent with other researches that have compared SERVQUAL and SERVPERF methods in the scope of service activities, and finally confirming that SERVPERF (performance-only) results in more reliable estimations, greater convergent and discriminant validity, greater explained variance, and consequently less bias than the SERVQUAL (Cronin and Taylor, 1992). This explains the considerable support that has emerged overtime in favour of SERVPERF scale (Churchill and Suprenant, 1982; Bolton and Drew, 1991; Babakus and Boller, 1992; Boulding et. al., 1993; Gotlieb, et. al., 1994). In light of above research findings, present study has also used SERVPERF model with certain modifications to measure educational service quality in University of Kashmir.

SAMPLE DESIGN

The study was conducted in the University of Kashmir for three months during the summer of 2014. The target population selected for this study comprised 3rd and 4th semester students only. These were purposely selected for the present study as they are relatively experienced and, therefore, have better understanding of evaluating educational service quality. The questionnaire was piloted on fifty (50) students randomly selected from various faculties of University of Kashmir. Convenience sampling approach (Getz, and Brown, 2006) was employed, in which 550 questionnaires were distributed to the students in thirty-eight (38) departments comprising nine (9) faculties who agreed to participate in the survey. Four hundred and fifty (450) questionnaires were received back representing a response rate of 81.81 percent. However, only four hundred twenty-five (425) questionnaires were found suitable for further analysis and the remaining were discarded. The sample comprises of fifty-two (52) percent males and forty-eight (48) percent females and all respondents were falling in the same age bracket of below twenty-five (25) years.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The study is based on the primary data collected from the students of various faculties in the University of Kashmir, Srinagar, through a questionnaire designed and developed after consultations and discussions on the aforesaid research problem with the panel of students, administrators and academicians as well as after reviewing the relevant literature. Some modifications were made to SERVPERF instrument in order to suit the context of educational service quality. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part 1st was designed to measure the perceptions of students regarding educational service quality and part 2nd contained questions relating to some demographic aspects of the respondents. The researchers introduced the tool of measurement in such a way that it briefly illustrated the topic of the study and procedures of response. The measurement grades were placed on 10-point Likert's Type Scale ranging from strongly disagree (0) to strongly agree (10).

All the items chosen for the questionnaire were modified and rephrased in terms of both wording and contextual applications to suit the present research purpose. On the basis of literature review, an initial pool of 55 items was generated. The questionnaire was piloted on fifty (50) students. After the elimination, addition and rephrasing of several questions, the final questionnaire was prepared consisting of twenty-nine (29) items. All the items in the questionnaire were then arranged alphabetically.

FACTOR ANALYSIS

The statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were used to measure students' perception scores. To explore dimensionality of the twenty-nine (29) item scale, the study used R-mode Principle Component-Analysis with a Varimax Rotation and Eigen value more than 1, which extracted five factors and shows 63.52 percent of variance in the data (Table 1).

TABLE 1: FACTOR ANALYSIS (n=425)

Item (n=26)	Factors					Communalities
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	
V11	.569					.713
V13	.747					.779
V14	.816					.705
V15	.735					.778
V17	.701					.803
V18	.705					.545
V25	.547					.610
V3		.682				.484
V7		.582				.479
V9		.624				.452
V10		.558				.671
V22		.819				.763
V24		.587				.705
V27		.724				.757
V6			.554			.757
V23			.773			.690
V26			.778			.666
V29			.727			.638
V1				.563		.606
V4				.623		.733
V5				.666		.497
V16				.753		.729
V20				.586		.560
V12					.612	.627
V21					.777	.696
V28					.536	.651
Eigen value	8.013	3.676	2.604	2.227	1.901	17.094
% of Variance	15.719	13.791	13.613	10.733	9.664	63.520
Cronbach's alpha (α)	.857	.785	.664	.719	.766	.943
Number of items	7	7	4	5	3	26

Most of the factor loadings were greater than 0.50, implying a reasonably high correlation between extracted factors and their individual items. The communalities of 26 items ranged from 0.374 to 0.803 indicating that a large amount of variance has been extracted by the factor solution. Three items (V2, V8, and V19 namely class time of your department is well suited to you, teaching and non-teaching staff of your department understands your specific needs, and, administrative staff is always accessible during office hours respectively) were below the suggested value of 0.50 (Haier and Andersen, 2006) and were not considered for further analysis. The remaining statements were grouped into five (5) factors labeled as **F1- 'Assurance'** (knowledge and accuracy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence), **F2-'Tangibility'** (appearance of the facilities, equipment and communication material), **F3'Reliability'** (solving students' problems and performing error-free service at promised time), **F4 'Empathy'** (staff knowledge and ability to provide individual attention) and **F5 'Responsiveness'** (willingness to help customers and to provide prompt service). The first factor (assurance) contains most of the items and explains most of the variance (15.71%), thus, is an important determinant of perceived educational service quality.

In order to measure the consistency of research instrument, Cronbach's alpha test was used as a measure of reliability. The present generated scale achieved the overall Alpha scores of 0.943 which is highly acceptable reliability coefficient (Nunnally, 1978; Tabachnik and Fidell, 2001). Reliability test was performed on each dimension also which showed an alpha score of 0.857 (Assurance); 0.785 (Tangibility); 0.719 (Empathy); 0.766 (Responsiveness) are above 0.7 and are highly reliable constructs except reliability dimension (0.664) which is very close of 0.70 and can be considered pretty reliable.

The adequacy of the sample size has examined using both the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) Sampling Adequacy Test and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS). The KMO measure for sample adequacy for service quality scores is 0.954 which exceeds satisfactory value of 0.6 (Tabachnik and Fidell, 2001) and revealed a Chi-Square at 8872.93, (P≤0.000) which verified that correlation matrix was not an identity matrix, thus validating the suitability of factor analysis (Table 2).

TABLE 2: KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.954
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Approx. Chi-Square)	8872.935*
P-value	0.000*

* Significance at 1% level

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In present study, the main focus of analysis was to measure service quality and its dimensions namely assurance, tangibility, reliability, empathy and responsiveness. To achieve this objective, service quality perceptions were obtained using 10 point likert type scale. Mean service quality scores on all dimensions of service quality were calculated separately and averaged for each faculty of the institution, under reference.

OVER-ALL SERVICE QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The data on table 3 clearly shows satisfactory level of educational services as overall service quality score is 6.65 which is more than 50%. Faculty-wise analysis of the said table reveals relatively better service quality of Faculty of Oriental Learning (7.34) followed by Faculty of Education (7.17) and Faculty of Biological Science (7.05) whereas Faculty of Law has been reported relatively low (6.06) followed by Faculty of Social Science (6.12) and Faculty of Applied Science (6.28). Dimension wise analysis reveals relatively higher service quality on tangibility (6.95) followed by reliability (6.71), while as assurance is relatively low (6.42) followed by responsiveness and empathy (6.52).

TABLE 3: OVER-ALL SERVICE QUALITY SCORES ON HIGHER EDUCATION

S. No.	Name of the University Faculties	Dimensions of Service Quality					Total	Rank
		Assurance	Tangibility	Reliability	Empathy	Responsiveness		
1	Faculty of Applied Science	5.70	6.55	6.76	6.32	6.22	6.28	7
2	Faculty of Art	6.17	6.64	6.46	6.34	6.25	6.38	6
3	Faculty of Biological Science	6.83	7.24	7.06	6.99	7.22	7.05	3
4	Faculty of Commerce & Management	6.61	6.92	7.03	6.68	6.86	6.80	4
5	Faculty of Law	5.69	6.44	5.93	6.23	5.96	6.06	9
6	Faculty of Physical & Material Sciences	6.50	7.29	6.55	6.63	6.64	6.76	5
7	Faculty of Social Science	5.98	6.41	6.13	6.13	5.77	6.12	8
8	Faculty of Oriental Learning	7.31	7.44	7.28	7.65	6.84	7.34	1
9	Faculty of Education	7.01	7.51	7.16	7.22	6.76	7.17	2
Over-all Service Quality (Averaged on all Faculties)		6.42	6.95	6.71	6.66	6.52	6.65	
Rank		5	1	2	3	4		

DIMENSION-WISE ANALYSIS

The analysis of the data on Table 4 clearly reveals better service performance on **assurance** dimension (6.42). Faculty-wise analysis of the said dimension brings to fore that service quality of Faculty of Oriental Learning (7.31) is comparatively high followed by Faculty of Education (7.01) and Faculty of Biological Science (6.83). However, Faculty of Law has been reported relatively low (5.69) by respective students followed by Faculty of Applied Science (5.70) and Faculty of Social Science (5.98). Its element-wise analysis reveals relatively higher service quality score on 'development of student knowledge followed by recognition of University degree and well mannered behavior of teaching and non teaching staff. However, university degree improving employment prospectus is reported poor (5.55) followed by teacher's competency in their academic backgrounds (5.5) and teachers making subjects understandable to students (5.5). The data on **tangibility** dimension reveals satisfactory level of education (6.94). Faculty-wise analysis reveals that service quality of Faculty of Education is comparatively high followed by Faculty of Oriental Learning and Faculty of Physical and Material Science (7.51, 7.44 and 7.29 respectively) while as Faculty of Social Science has been reported low followed by Faculty of Law and Faculty of Applied Science (6.41, 6.44 and 6.55 respectively). So far as its element-wise analysis is concerned, service quality score is comparatively higher on availability of books and periodicals in departmental library (7.86) followed by availability of adequate amenities (7.53) and cleanliness of washrooms, corridors, class rooms, library and labs (7.36). Lighting in class rooms has been reported low with a mean score of (5.73) followed by convenient location of University (6.55) and appearance of teaching and non teaching staff (6.93). On **reliability** dimension, the data (Table 4) indicates satisfactory level of educational services (6.71). Its faculty-wise analysis brings to light that faculty of Oriental Learning has outperformed all other faculties of University of Kashmir with high service quality score (7.73) followed by Faculty of Education (7.16) and Faculty of Biological Science (7.16, 7.06 respectively). Whereas Faculty of Law has been reported relatively low followed by Faculty of Social Science and Faculty of Art (5.93, 6.55 and 6.46 respectively). Element-wise analysis of the said dimension brings to light high service quality score on regular class work and completion of syllabus (ranked 1st) followed by properly scheduled classes, exams, providing timely information regarding exams, results, admission etc (ranked 2nd). However, maintaining error-free records of students and providing timely and adequate information to students have been reported low (6.02) and hence ranked 4th followed by correct record keeping of student's academic performances and administrative records (6.18) and ranked 3rd. Satisfactory service quality score has been reported on **Empathy** dimension (6.68) as reported by the respondents. Further analysis of the said dimension reveals relatively better service quality of Faculty of Oriental Learning followed by Faculty of Education and Faculty of Biological Science (7.65, 7.22 and 6.99 respectively). Faculty of Social Work reported comparatively low mean scores (ranked 9th) followed by Faculty of Law and Faculty of Applied Science (ranked 8th and 7th respectively). Element-wise analysis of the said dimension indicates, high service quality score on treating all students equally (ranked 1st) followed by individual attention given by teaching staff (ranked 2nd). However, lack of friendly environment and opportunities for interaction with other students have been recorded comparatively low (ranked 5th) followed by good communication skills of teachers and their teaching practices (ranked 4th). The data on **responsiveness** dimension brings to light that educational service quality is quiet satisfactory (6.50). Faculty-wise comparison of the said dimension shows relatively better service quality in Faculty of Biological Science (ranked 1st) followed by Faculty of Commerce and Management (ranked 2nd) and Faculty of Oriental Learning (ranked 3rd). While as Faculty of Social Science reported comparatively low mean score (ranked 9th) followed by Faculty of Law (ranked 8th) and Faculty of Applied Science (ranked 7th). Its element-wise analysis brings to light high service quality score on promptly response to student requests by teaching and non teaching staff followed by knowledge to answer student questions relating to the course content and polite reaction of student queries by teaching staff and valuable feedback of teaching staff about the progress of students (6.64, 6.55 and 6.31 respectively).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The quality of higher education is fundamental to a country's development. In view of this fact, present study was conducted to measure the quality of educational services in the University of Kashmir. A modified SERVPERF instrument was used and exploratory factor analyses was performed which identified five dimensions namely, assurance, tangibility, reliability, empathy and responsiveness. Assurance followed by tangibility and reliability are three important antecedent of perceived service quality in educational services as they contain most of the items (7, 7 and 4 respectively) and explains maximum variance among all dimensions (15.719, 13.791 and 13.613 respectively). The findings of this study conclude that among five dimensions of service quality, assurance dimension emerged as the important indicator of educational service quality.

Considering the overall service quality scores (6.65), the study concludes that relatively better educational services are being provided by the University of Kashmir, however, service quality of Faculty of Oriental Learning has been reported relatively high (7.34) followed by Faculty of Education (7.17) and Faculty of Biological Science (7.05) while-as Faculty of Law has been reported comparatively low followed by Faculty of Social Science and Faculty of Applied Science with mean scores 6.06, 6.12 and 6.28 respectively implying improvement on assurance and reliability dimensions to improve overall quality of educational services. Dimension wise analysis reveals relatively higher service quality on tangibility (ranked 1st) followed by reliability, while as assurance is relatively low (ranked 5th) followed by responsiveness and empathy (ranked 3rd) which suggests an improvement in said dimensions particularly on degree from this university improves employment prospects, providing valuable feedback about student's progress, good communication skills and good teaching practices, and friendly environment and provision of opportunities for interaction with other student groups to improve overall quality of educational services. Also, relatively low scores have been observed on variables like lighting in class rooms, maintenance of error free records of students and provision of timely and adequate information to students, providing valuable feedback about student progress which demands more attention from the university administration, under reference, to augment the overall quality of educational services.

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TABLE 4: COMPARATIVE SERVICE QUALITY SCORES OF DIFFERENT FACULTIES

Service Quality Dimensions	Elements of Service Quality	Name of the University Faculties										Rank
		Applied Science	Art	Biological Science	Commerce & Mgt.	Law	Physical Science	Social Science	Oriental Learning	Education	Total	
Assurance	1. Degree from this university is recognized nationally and internationally	6.21	6.51	7.34	6.70	6.86	7.40	6.30	6.58	6.68	6.73	2
	2. Degree from this university improves employment prospects	4.71	5.20	5.67	5.95	4.20	5.34	5.09	7.09	6.66	5.55	7
	3. Teachers are competent for their academic backgrounds	4.94	5.68	6.27	6.15	4.68	5.72	5.52	7.36	7.00	5.92	5.5
	4. Teachers' make subjects understandable to students	4.98	5.68	6.22	6.25	5.20	5.52	5.70	7.17	6.58	5.92	5.5
	5. The course content develops student knowledge	7.21	7.04	8.25	7.91	7.41	8.63	7.93	8.34	8.14	7.87	1
	6. Teaching and Non-teaching staff are courteous and their behavior builds confidence	5.89	6.67	7.08	7.05	5.62	6.80	5.66	7.56	7.12	6.61	3
	7. Teaching and Non-teaching staff has knowledge of university rules and regulations	5.94	6.42	6.98	6.27	5.89	6.09	5.66	7.04	6.92	6.36	4
	Over-all Service Quality on Assurance (Averaged on all Faculties)	5.70	6.17	6.83	6.61	5.69	6.50	5.98	7.31	7.01	6.42	
Rank	8	6	3	4	9	5	7	1	2			
Tangibility	1. Appropriate location of University	6.46	6.00	6.39	6.52	6.51	7.01	5.67	7.58	6.84	6.55	6
	2. Departmental library has a wide range of books and periodicals	8.16	7.55	7.74	7.86	7.44	8.44	7.49	7.78	8.26	7.86	1
	3. Your department has clean wash rooms, corridors, class rooms, library and labs	6.80	7.42	8.00	7.16	6.31	7.71	7.24	7.53	8.06	7.36	3
	4. Department has modern equipment.	6.28	7.01	7.44	6.87	6.37	7.56	6.38	7.31	7.34	6.95	4
	5. Lighting in class rooms of your department is appropriate	4.42	4.97	5.53	5.80	4.48	5.44	4.44	6.97	6.28	5.37	7
	6. University has adequate amenities (Canteen, Bank, ATMs etc.)	7.01	7.11	7.75	7.75	7.55	7.63	7.18	7.78	8.04	7.53	2
	7. Teaching and Non-teaching staffs are always well dressed	6.73	6.44	7.84	6.45	6.44	7.12	6.47	7.12	7.80	6.93	5
	Over-all Service Quality on Tangibility (Averaged on all Faculties)	6.55	6.64	7.24	6.92	6.44	7.29	6.41	7.44	7.51	6.94	
Rank	7	6	4	5	8	3	9	2	1			
Reliability	1. Regular class work and completion of syllabus in time	8.05	7.10	8.18	7.91	8.13	8.04	7.53	7.24	7.40	7.73	1
	2. Classes and exams are properly scheduled and dept provides timely information regarding exams, results, admission etc.	7.21	7.18	7.96	7.50	5.00	6.14	6.35	7.43	7.36	6.90	2
	3. Academic performances and administrative records are kept correctly	6.26	6.40	5.79	5.87	5.03	5.87	5.18	7.70	7.48	6.18	3
	4. Maintenance of error free records of students and provision of timely and adequate information to students	5.51	5.17	6.31	6.84	5.55	6.17	5.47	6.73	6.42	6.02	4
	Over-all Service Quality on Reliability (Averaged on all Faculties)	6.76	6.46	7.06	7.03	5.93	6.55	6.13	7.28	7.16	6.71	
Rank	5	7	3	4	9	6	8	1	2			
Empathy	1. Equal treatment to students by teaching staff	7.16	6.44	7.29	7.23	8.17	7.31	6.78	7.70	7.22	7.26	1
	2. Individualized attention to students	6.26	6.82	7.24	6.66	6.79	6.51	6.40	8.19	7.70	6.95	2
	3. Friendly environment and provision of opportunities for interaction with other student groups	6.50	6.78	6.43	6.47	5.13	6.54	5.92	7.34	7.20	6.48	4
	4. Good communication skills and good teaching practices	5.01	5.00	6.43	5.70	4.49	5.55	5.38	7.65	7.06	5.81	5
	5. Teaching and non-teaching staff keeps your best interest in heart	6.67	6.65	7.56	7.33	6.10	7.23	6.20	7.39	6.92	6.89	3
	Over-all Service Quality on Empathy (Averaged on all Faculties)	6.32	6.34	6.99	6.68	6.23	6.63	6.13	7.65	7.22	6.68	
Rank	7	6	3	4	8	5	9	1	2			
Responsiveness	1. Teaching and Non-teaching staff responds promptly to your requests all the time	6.50	6.48	7.32	6.91	6.03	7.14	5.95	6.58	6.88	6.64	1
	2. Providing valuable feedback about student progress	5.37	6.04	7.03	6.87	5.68	6.38	5.75	7.19	6.46	6.31	3
	3. Teaching staff have the knowledge to answer your questions	6.78	6.22	7.31	6.80	6.17	6.40	5.61	6.75	6.94	6.55	2
	Over-all Service Quality on Responsiveness (Averaged on all Faculties)	6.22	6.25	7.22	6.86	5.96	6.64	5.77	6.84	6.76	6.50	
Rank	7	6	1	2	8	5	9	3	4			

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